UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1995/65
25 January 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SECOND REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON SECURITY IN THE RWANDESE REFUGEE CAMPS

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted in pursuance of the statement by the President of the Security Council dated 30 November 1994 (S/PRST/1994/75), in which the Security Council stressed that a determined effort must be made by the international community to promote the repatriation of the Rwandese refugees, to reduce intimidation of prospective returnees and to improve security in the Rwandese refugee camps, especially those in Zaire. To that end, the Security Council requested me, inter alia, to continue to explore, as appropriate, all possible means of addressing the problems of security in the Rwandese refugee camps.

2. While there have been some positive developments since my report of 18 November 1994 (S/1994/1308) in respect of the creation of conditions conducive to repatriation, the continuing presence of nearly 2 million Rwandese refugees in Burundi, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zaire is a matter of serious concern. The general security situation in the camps remains dangerous for both refugees and relief workers. The situation is also potentially destabilizing for the host countries and for the subregion as a whole. The only effective solution to this problem remains the safe and voluntary repatriation of the refugees. Accordingly, and taking into account the improving situation within Rwanda, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reiterated, in December 1994, that it would assist, wherever possible, the voluntary return of those refugees who wished to go back to Rwanda.

3. The Government of Rwanda has signed tripartite agreements with UNHCR and the Governments of Burundi and Zaire respectively on the voluntary repatriation of refugees. These agreements define the conditions for repatriation, including returnee protection and land tenure. The Governments of Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania are also involved in an ongoing dialogue on issues affecting the refugees in the latter country and their repatriation to Rwanda.

4. So far, only 200,000 refugees out of those who left the country after 6 April 1994 have returned to Rwanda. As indicated in my report of 18 November, the combined factors of intimidation by the former government leaders, military

and militia of refugees who wish to return to Rwanda and the concern on the part of the refugees that they may face reprisals and/or may not be able to regain their property once they do return to the country continue to be the main factors impeding repatriation.

5. In pursuance of the Security Council's presidential statement of 30 November, I dispatched a joint technical team from the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and UNHCR, to Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zaire from 11 to 19 December to review the situation prevailing in the refugee camps. The team's findings are summarized below.

II. PRESENT SITUATION

A. Refugees in Burundi

6. There are approximately 200,000 refugees, mostly from southern Rwanda, in Burundi, primarily in the northern region of the country. There is constant movement of refugees in this area, as Rwandese continue to seek security in Burundi and both Rwandese and Burundi nationals continue to move to the United Republic of Tanzania in search of more secure conditions.

7. Considering the very sensitive nature of the security problems in Burundi, UNHCR's efforts to address security in the refugee camps essentially have centred around improved monitoring of the prevailing conditions, through an effective field presence and vigorous démarches with the civilian and military authorities. UNHCR plans to continue to pursue this course of action, and is assigning an increased number of experienced officers not only to the regions of Burundi hosting refugees but also to the capital.

B. Refugees in the United Republic of Tanzania

8. There are approximately 600,000 Rwandese refugees living in eight camps in the United Republic of Tanzania. While the population of these camps continues to increase, this influx, as noted above, consists mostly of Rwandese refugees from Burundi and Burundi nationals seeking more secure conditions.

9. The camps in the United Republic of Tanzania are relatively more secure and better organized than those in Zaire, mostly because fewer refugees fled to this area and the relief community was already established in the area before the influx took place. As in Zaire, the refugees have created governing structures similar to those that existed in Rwanda, beginning at the prefecture level and extending down to the commune level. They have chosen leaders who exercise authority at all levels of this hierarchy. (Some of these leaders held the same positions before the war.) As in refugee camps elsewhere, the local governing structure in the Rwandese camps in Zaire and the United Republic of Tanzania provides a sense of organization in the camps, as well as a security mechanism, and facilitates the delivery of relief assistance.

10. The refugees in the Tanzanian camps have been registered, and assistance is therefore delivered directly to them. Hence, there is no scope for the misuse

of assistance by refugee leaders, as has been the case in Zaire. However, extremist elements in the camps in the United Republic of Tanzania are reported to have considerable influence over the refugee population, though to a lesser extent than in Zaire.

11. The Tanzanian Government and UNHCR have determined that security in the camps can be enhanced through the deployment of Tanzanian police personnel. These personnel not only must be sufficient in number but must also be adequately equipped to maintain law and order. So far, 310 Tanzanian police, both general duty and special forces, have been assigned to the refugee camps. They are currently receiving assistance from UNHCR, covering such items as tents and food rations, as well as incentive allowances. UNHCR has also made vehicles and communications equipment available to the Tanzanian police force.

12. The refugee population has also created its own security force, the "refugee guardians", which cooperates with the Tanzanian police force. While conditions are currently stable in the camps, it is nevertheless felt that, given the degree of control the leaders have over the camp population, they could easily allow the security situation to deteriorate, should it be in their interest to do so.

C. Refugees in Zaire

13. There are approximately 1.4 million Rwandese refugees living in the camps in Zaire. These camps continue to be the most potentially explosive, with the most acute security situation in the camps north of Lake Kivu, in the Goma region, where approximately 850,000 refugees are located. It is therefore considered that, while further steps need to be taken to increase security in the camps in the United Republic of Tanzania and Burundi, priority should be accorded to increasing security in the camps in Zaire, especially in the Goma region.

14. For the most part, the refugees in the Goma area of Zaire fled Rwanda in mid-1994. The political leaders of the former Government, as well as their armed forces and the militia, fled to this area together with countless civilians as the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) gained control over the western part of Rwanda in the last days of the war. As a result, the refugee population in Zaire tends to include more political, military and militia elements of the former Government than the camps in the United Republic of Tanzania or Burundi and their hostility towards the Government in Kigali is reflected in actions that have led to insecure conditions in the camps.

15. More specifically, the refugees are intimidated from publicly expressing their desire to return to Rwanda. The lives of such people, as well as the lives of politically moderate refugees or those who may have intermarried or are suspected of being infiltrators are seriously threatened and some of them are known to have been killed. There is also a significant threat of civil disturbances in the camps. This threat is especially acute when refugees congregate together, for example, when relief supplies are distributed. In addition, as in any area containing a large number of people living in highly dense and impoverished conditions, common crime is prevalent in the camps.

16. The threat to the safety of international relief workers is also significant. There are now 45 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and about 1,600 international relief workers in the Goma area alone. A large number of local Zairian and Rwandese relief personnel also work in the camps. The security threat to these relief workers includes harassment, especially on their way to and from the camps when they are frequently stopped, in some cases at gunpoint, and asked to pay tolls or are threatened for other reasons. There is also a significant risk that relief workers can be caught up in civil disturbances or incidents between refugees themselves. Some relief workers have been threatened by refugees who for some reason wrongly perceive them to be opposed to their interests.

17. Initially, the leaders in the camps were called upon to facilitate the delivery of relief assistance. Unfortunately, they misused this responsibility by using the delivery of assistance to persuade refugees to behave according to their interests and by hoarding and/or selling such assistance rather than distributing it. As a result, the incidence of malnutrition, especially in the most vulnerable groups, including women, children and the elderly, was initially much higher than it should have been given the level of assistance provided. Recently, it has however been possible to provide assistance more directly to the beneficiaries and, as a result, both the negative influence of the camp leaders and levels of malnutrition have been reduced. In addition, UNHCR is about to proceed with the registration of refugees in the camps, which will also help to ensure more effective delivery of relief assistance.

18. The Government of Zaire has taken steps in recent months to enhance the security situation in the camps. As a result, the security situation has improved somewhat since my last report. However, it is assessed that the potential for serious disturbances remains extremely high.

19. Recently, Japanese and United States seismologists have detected new signs of a possible volcanic eruption in the seismically active area of Goma. A UNHCR task force is preparing contingency plans for evacuation from camps that might be affected, including the identification of temporary sites for the relocation of the refugee population concerned. In the meantime, seismic activity is being monitored on a regular basis.

20. The majority of refugees are aware that their long-term interests will be served only by returning to Rwanda and that assistance cannot be provided to them indefinitely in the camps. It is assumed that at least 25 per cent of the refugees would not face land tenure problems upon their return to Rwanda and that, under present conditions, 25 to 50 per cent of the refugees could return in the next 6 to 12 months. UNHCR also considers that, if security is provided for repatriation, the rate of voluntary return to Rwanda would increase.

III. MEASURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SECURE CONDITIONS IN THE CAMPS

A. Peace-keeping operation

21. In its presidential statement of 30 November, the Security Council requested me to consult with potential troop-contributing countries to assess their willingness to participate in a possible peace-keeping operation to enhance security in the camps modelled along the lines described in paragraphs 18 to 25 of my report of 18 November. The Council also requested me to provide a detailed description of the objectives, rules of engagement and costs of such an operation. Accordingly, the joint Department of Peace-Keeping Operations/UNHCR technical team was asked to collect pertinent information for use in the formulation of recommendations along the lines requested by the Security Council.

22. It will be recalled that the objective of the peace-keeping operation outlined in paragraphs 18 to 25 of my 18 November report was to provide security for international relief workers, protection for the storage and delivery of humanitarian assistance and safe passage to the Rwandese border for those refugees who wish to return to Rwanda. It was estimated that a force size of approximately 3,000 all ranks would be required to carry out these tasks in the camps north of Lake Kivu. A parallel operation, launched simultaneously in the area south of Lake Kivu, where conditions are marginally more secure, would require an additional 2,000 troops.

23. The proposed peace-keeping operation was to be conducted in two phases. During the first phase, two mechanized battalions would cordon off and establish secure areas in the camps, within which local security units would be formed and trained by international security experts. During the second phase of the operation, once reasonably secure conditions were deemed to have been created, the local forces would take over the security functions being performed by the peace-keeping troops, with back-up support provided by a smaller group of United Nations military personnel. The mechanized battalions would then move forward to create similar secure areas in other locations.

24. The joint technical mission confirmed the feasibility of such an approach, but considered that the operation would require more than the originally estimated 3,000 to 5,000 troops. It estimated that the tasks in the north Kivu region alone would require a force of 4,100, including military logistic support units, instead of 3,000 as indicated in my report of 18 November. The mission further concluded that a similar operation in the south Kivu region also would require a substantially stronger force than originally anticipated. The rules of engagement for such an operation would, in accordance with normal practice, authorize the use of force in self-defence, including against forcible attempts to impede the discharge of the operation's mandate. In addition, as foreseen for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) under resolution 918 (1994), the force would be authorized to take action against persons or groups who threaten protected sites and populations, United Nations and other humanitarian personnel or the means of delivery and distribution of humanitarian relief.

25. Since the adoption of the presidential statement of 30 November, I have consulted with about 60 potential troop-contributing countries to ascertain their readiness to make available the troops necessary to undertake such an operation. As of 23 January, only one country had formally offered a unit. Under these circumstances, it is clear that the option of deploying a peace-keeping force to address the security issues in the refugee camps in Zaire is not feasible. Accordingly, it has not been considered necessary to prepare cost estimates for this option.

B. Alternative measures

1. An international police/military observer group

26. In its presidential statement of 30 November, the Security Council also requested me to assess the possibility of interim measures aimed at providing immediate assistance to the Zairian security forces in protecting humanitarian operations in the camps, including the possibility of deploying security experts, from member Governments or through contractual arrangements, to train and monitor the local security forces. Towards this end, the joint Department of Peace-Keeping Operations/UNHCR technical mission explored the possibility of an approach based on the deployment of Zairian security forces, which would assume responsibility for improving security in the camps, with the support of a group of United Nations civilian police and military observers.

27. In order to enhance security in the camps, it was considered that the local security forces should perform the following tasks:

(a) Patrolling. As noted above, refugees suffer from the high incidence of common crime, in addition to intimidation. Relief workers can also be easily caught up in civil disturbances. A 24-hour patrolling presence of security personnel could help to maintain law and order, thus alleviating such threats. These personnel would gradually develop relations with the refugees and their governing structures and would work with them in controlling and abating the incidence of common crime;

(b) Escort and guarding of static points. Given the risks present in travelling to and from Goma, an escort capacity should be created to accompany relief workers when travelling at night and in the early morning. A security presence would also be of benefit at static positions in the camps, including, for example, at aid-distribution points, UNHCR and NGO focal sites, hospitals, feeding centres and dispensaries. A security presence would also be required to keep a sense of order and calm during the census and registration of the refugees, which UNHCR is planning to conduct in the camps in the near future;

(c) Storage and transport of humanitarian assistance. The main security issue related to the storage of relief assistance is the looting of warehouses. While these areas are currently guarded, the problem of looting has not been alleviated. An additional security presence, as well as increased lighting and fencing, are therefore required. The transport of assistance to and from the warehouses is deemed to be threatened at this time;

(d) Security for repatriation. Enhanced security is of particular importance to facilitate the repatriation of refugees who have expressed the wish to return to Rwanda. At present, just indicating a desire to return to Rwanda can put refugees in considerable danger. It is therefore considered essential that, upon indicating to relief workers their desire to return to Rwanda, refugees should be offered security, including immediate transfer to transit camps. Such camps would be established in Zaire at some distance from the refugee camps to house refugees until they can be transported to the border. These camps would require a 24-hour security presence. Security for the transportation of refugees to the border, which is now provided, should be strengthened.

28. As indicated above, it was envisaged that these tasks could be carried out by a local security force. A group of approximately 150 to 200 United Nations civilian police officers would be required to train and monitor the local forces. In addition, about 30 to 50 military observers would be deployed to liaise with the local forces at the command level on issues related to the overall implementation of the operation. The military observers would also assist coordinate repatriation.

29. During my meeting with him on 15 December 1994, the Prime Minister of Zaire, H.E. Mr. Kengo Wa Dondo, confirmed to me his Government's readiness to provide the troops necessary to enhance security in the camps. I therefore instructed my Special Representative for Rwanda, Mr. Shaharyar Khan, to visit Kinshasa to discuss with Zairian officials the possibility of the Government of Zaire undertaking these tasks, on the understanding that the international community would be encouraged to assist with an appropriate level of logistic and financial support.

30. Mr. Khan visited Kinshasa from 28 to 31 December. He was accompanied by a representative of UNHCR as well as the UNAMIR Deputy Force Commander and logistic experts. In Kinshasa, Mr. Khan was received by the Prime Minister and met with the Ministers of Defence, Justice, Foreign Affairs and the Interior. Technical talks were also held at the working level. Zairian officials indicated their Government's hope that the refugees would soon return to Rwanda. They stressed that effective steps should be taken in Rwanda to ensure that repatriation could take place in conditions of safety and dignity. They also reiterated the Zairian Government's commitment to address the security situation in the camps and indicated its readiness to initiate prompt action in that regard, with the cooperation and support of the United Nations.

31. The Government of Zaire indicated that it would be prepared to deploy a national security force of about 1,500 to 2,500 troops to the camps. Through technical discussions, the modalities of the logistic and other external support needed for these troops were considered. The Government welcomed the proposal that international police and military observers be deployed to the area to provide technical advice to the local security force and to monitor and coordinate the operation. However, it pointed out that it did not favour deployment of United Nations peace-keeping troops to the camps.

32. In order to pursue this option, nearly 50 Member States were contacted to ascertain their willingness to provide police personnel, stressing the

importance of French-speaking personnel. As of 23 January, only four countries had expressed an interest in providing civilian police personnel and only one of these countries was French-speaking. As regards military observers, it was felt that, in order to expedite implementation, the military observers could perhaps be provided by UNAMIR on a temporary basis, subject to the concurrence of the contributing countries concerned. These countries have been consulted in this regard. However, only one of them has so far responded that it would, in principle, be prepared to allow its military observers to operate in Zaire. It therefore seems that this second, more modest, approach to enhancing security in the camps in Zaire faces difficulties and cannot be pursued, at least at present.

33. Mr. Khan also visited the United Republic of Tanzania on 4 and 5 January 1995, where he was received by President Mwini and Prime Minister Msunya. While in Dar-es-Salaam, he also met with the Chief of Defence Staff of the Tanzanian Army and the Inspector-General of the Police. The Tanzanian Government also indicated its view that the refugees should return to Rwanda and that efforts should be continued to ensure that conditions conducive to voluntary repatriation of the refugees were created inside the country.

34. As noted above, at present, 310 Tanzanian police officers are providing security in the camps. The Government indicated that it would be prepared to increase this force to 500, but that it would require logistic and operational support from external sources in order to do so. Some support towards this end is currently being provided by the Government of the Netherlands through UNHCR.

2. Contractual arrangements

35. Another possibility, which has been explored by the Secretariat on a contingency basis, is the provision of training and monitoring support to the local security forces through contractual arrangements with a private organization. Under such arrangements, a local force would be trained by a team of 50 international instructors, 10 of whom would remain behind after the initial training was completed to provide further on-the-job training assistance. An additional 40 international experts would be required to monitor the operation and for liaison and coordination functions. It is estimated that the training programme would take a period of one month for each group of local personnel trained and that, within two months of the start of the operation, the first group of local personnel could be deployed to its area of operations. Within four months, the entire local force would be trained and deployed to the camps both north and south of Lake Kivu.

36. The possibility of undertaking such an operation, including the provision of logistic and other support to the local security forces, has been discussed with UNHCR. However, initial financial estimates show that an operation of this nature would be costly. Moreover, since it would have to be funded entirely through voluntary contributions, UNHCR does not feel that it would be able to mobilize the necessary resources, especially since some potential donor Governments have indicated that they would not be in favour of this approach.

C. Security measures through UNHCR

37. Since the various options described above do not appear feasible, at least at the present stage, I have recently held further consultations on the problem of security in the refugee camps, especially those in Zaire, with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mrs. Sadako Ogata. As a result of these consultations, it has been decided that UNHCR would follow up with the Government of Zaire on the discussions held by my Special Representative, with a view to concluding appropriate arrangements, under UNHCR's refugee protection and humanitarian assistance mandate, to enhance security in the camps. I have informed the Prime Minister of Zaire accordingly and have expressed to him the hope that these discussions would lead to the early definition and implementation of mutually acceptable arrangements to enhance the safety and security of the Rwandese refugees in Zaire.

38. UNHCR has dispatched a Special Envoy to Kinshasa for this purpose. UNHCR will keep me informed of the progress made in this regard and I shall advise the Security Council accordingly. UNHCR will also continue to explore means of augmenting support to the Tanzanian Government to enable it to increase the level of security it is currently providing in the camps. As regards the refugee camps in Burundi, UNHCR has indicated that, for the time being, the security situation in these camps is being adequately addressed through the measures described in paragraph 7 above. UNAMIR, for its part, will continue to coordinate closely with UNHCR in facilitating the safe and voluntary repatriation of the refugees to Rwanda.

IV. OBSERVATIONS

39. The scope and complexity of the problems in the Rwandese refugee camps, especially those in Zaire, represent an unprecedented challenge. It is therefore not surprising that the search for an appropriate solution to these problems has been a difficult process. As the present report demonstrates, the options aimed at enhancing security in the camps through a peace-keeping operation, under one form or another, do not appear viable, at least at the present time.

40. Peace-keeping is essentially an instrument for conflict management and resolution. It is true that in recent years it has undergone an important quantitative and qualitative evolution. However, it is not designed and has not generally been used to ensure security in refugee camps. Indeed, it has traditionally been the responsibility of the host countries to provide security to the refugees located on their territory, albeit with an appropriate level of support from the international community.

41. I therefore understand the hesitations of Member States regarding the idea of seeking a solution to the security problems in the camps through the instrument of peace-keeping. There is no doubt, however, that the innocent civilians, who fled Rwanda in the wake of a devastating civil war and are exposed daily to intimidation and violence in the camps, deserve the continued attention and assistance of the international community, both where they are now and in their efforts to return to their country. Furthermore, the humanitarian

relief personnel, who are risking their lives to ensure that basic assistance reaches the refugees, should be provided with adequate security to be able to carry out their work effectively. I therefore strongly urge the international community to support the efforts of UNHCR, in cooperation with the Governments of Zaire and the United Republic of Tanzania, to put in place satisfactory security arrangements in the camps and to provide generously the resources required for this purpose.

42. Strengthening security in the camps is an indispensable step for creating conditions conducive to the voluntary repatriation of the refugees. However, as I stressed in my report of 18 November, any effort to provide security in the camps would be futile unless parallel steps are also taken inside Rwanda to ensure that the refugees can return to their home communities without fear of retribution or persecution and to promote genuine national reconciliation between all segments of Rwandese society. Until now the Government of Rwanda, which assumed power in a traumatized and shattered country, with its infrastructure virtually destroyed and its inhabitants severely dislocated, has been bereft of even the minimum resources to begin to restore normal conditions. The commitments made at the recent Round-table Conference on Rwanda and in response to the consolidated inter-agency appeal bring some hope that this process now can commence. This in turn would promote the prospects of reinvigorating the political process and providing a framework for the action to be taken to address security in the camps and repatriation of the refugees to Rwanda, as suggested by the Security Council in its statement of 30 November 1994.

43. The summit meeting of the leaders in the subregion, held in Nairobi on 7 January 1995, made a useful contribution towards the definition of such a framework. This meeting brought together the Presidents of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia and the Prime Minister of Zaire. My Special Representative for Rwanda also attended the meeting. The regional leaders emphasized the close relationship between improving both security in the refugee camps and conditions inside Rwanda in order to create an environment conducive to the voluntary repatriation of the refugees. In this connection, they affirmed their support for the establishment and operationalization of the International Tribunal for Rwanda; the separation of suspected perpetrators of genocide from innocent refugees and the separation of intimidators from the refugee camps, as well as the establishment of safe corridors from refugee camps to the Rwandese border and of safe corridors and transit points inside Rwanda. They commended the Government of Rwanda for the steps it has so far taken to establish a broad-based government administration and urged the Government, towards this end, to deepen its efforts, in the spirit of the Arusha peace accord. They further urged the Government of Rwanda to put in place additional confidence-building measures to encourage the voluntary return of refugees. The regional leaders also urged the international community to increase its economic support for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Rwanda.

44. The progress achieved at the regional summit of 7 January should facilitate the work to be undertaken during the Regional Conference on Assistance to Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in the Great Lakes Region to be hosted by the Organization of African Unity and UNHCR in Bujumbura in mid-February. A

preparatory meeting for the Conference was held in Addis Ababa on 9 January. I hope that the Conference will lead to further progress in creating the conditions necessary for the refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes in safety and dignity and that it will open the way to the holding of a broader conference aimed at identifying long-term solutions to promote and ensure peace, security and development in the subregion. Preliminary consultations with interested Governments are currently under way to develop a consensus on the issues to be addressed by such a conference.